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A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO
INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO AWARD THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL
FOR BATAAN VETERANS.

WHEREAS, beginning December 8, 1941, in the critical
early hours of World War II, the 200th coast artillery of the
New Mexico national guard was in the first line of defense in
the United States commonwealth territory of the Philippines
against the attack launched by Japanese forces immediately
after Japan's December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor,
Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, during the 1941 Japanese invasion of the
Philippines, the 200th coast artillery of the New Mexico
national guard stood between the invading Japanese forces and
the freedom of the American and Filipino peoples; and

WHEREAS, the 200th coast artillery was the first to fire
upon Japanese forces and the last to put down their rifles
when ordered to surrender on April 9, 1942; and

WHEREAS, before being ordered to surrender, the men of
the 200th coast artillery made a valiant stand in the face of
terrible odds, while suffering through months of enemy attack
with outmoded equipment; a scarcity of food, medicine and
ammunition; and diseases such as malaria, dysentery and
beriberi that ravaged them to utter exhaustion; and

1 WHEREAS, the men of the 200th coast artillery were
2 captured by Japanese forces on April 9, 1942 and, in an
3 already starved, exhausted and sickened state, they had to
4 endure the infamous Bataan death march, during which Japanese
5 soldiers forced the men of the 200th coast artillery to march
6 for six long days in scorching tropical heat while starving
7 and brutalizing the men along the way; and

8 WHEREAS, the courageous men of the 200th coast artillery
9 endured four years in prisoner of war camps, where they were
10 forced into slave labor and lost scores of their ranks to
11 starvation, disease and brutality; and

12 WHEREAS, the men who returned home contributed
13 immeasurably to the country's growth as members of the
14 "greatest generation"; and

15 WHEREAS, the 200th coast artillery received four
16 presidential unit citations and the Philippine presidential
17 citation for their valorous defense of the American and
18 Filipino peoples; and

19 WHEREAS, the congressional gold medal is considered the
20 nation's highest civilian award and the most distinguished
21 award given by the United States congress for citizens who
22 represent the best characteristics of the American people;

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
24 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the members of the New Mexico
25 congressional delegation be requested to introduce

1 legislation to award the congressional gold medal to the men
2 of the 200th coast artillery of the New Mexico national
3 guard; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
5 transmitted to the members of the New Mexico congressional
6 delegation and to Governor Richardson.

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SJM 1
Page 3

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